

REMARKS

Claims 7, 9-11, and 13-26 are pending. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Interview Summary

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of the in-person interview held on September 31, 2011 between Examiner Andrews and Applicants' representative, Adam Chapin.

Zabar and Rumswinkel were discussed during the interview in relation to the independent claims. Applicants' representative discussed how the combination of Zabar with Rumswinkel would not render obvious the independent claims.

Also discussed was the interpretation of Rumswinkel. The Examiner explained that there was no pre-tensioning force applied in the shown position of the Figures of Rumswinkel. Further, the Examiner alleged that the "center position" of Rumswinkel was the alignment of the armature to the magnet.

Applicant's representative noted that Rumswinkel's armature would not symmetrically oscillate about the aligned position that the Examiner asserted was the center position.

No agreement was reached.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7, 9-10, 13-17, 19-23, and 25-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Zabar (U.S. Patent No. 6,323,568) in view of Rumswinkel (German Patent Number 1146678). Claims 11, 18, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Zabar and Rumswinkel in further view of Howe (US Patent No. 3,678,30). These rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Applicants' independent claim 1 sets forth that the armature symmetrically oscillates about a center position and further that the center of the armature is aligned with the center of the yoke body in the claimed center position. A spring is also attached to the armature. The spring acts to displace the armature to the center position. This

displacement also applies a force in the direction of movement of the armature. These features are not taught or suggested by Zabar, Rumswinkel, Howe, or the alleged combination thereof. Similar, but not identical features, are set forth in independent claims 13 and 20.

Applicants discussed Zabar and Rumswinkel at great length in previous responses. Zabar shows a standard drive unit. (See Fig. 1). However, the middle point of the symmetric oscillation in Zabar does not apply any pre-tensioning force. Indeed, in Zabar the center (e.g., middle point of the oscillating armature) and rest position appear to be the same. Further, the Office Action acknowledges that Zabar does not teach, when the armature is in the center position, displacement of the armature in relation to the clamped position or the spring being “pre-tensioned.” (See Office Action at Page 5).

To remedy Zabar’s deficiency, the Office Action introduces Rumswinkel. Fig. 3 of Rumswinkel is reproduced below.

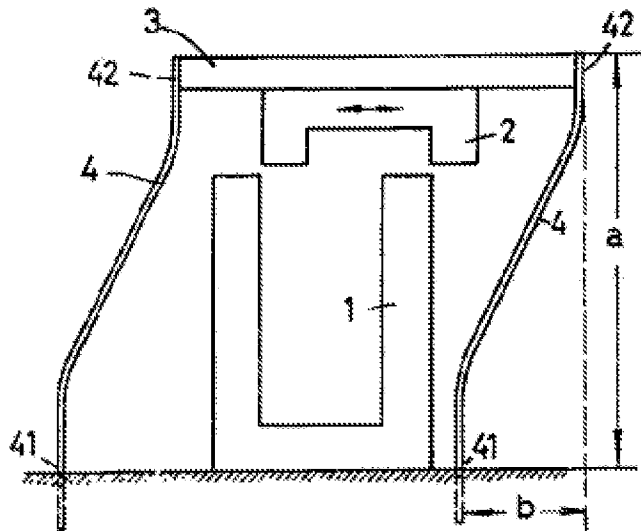


FIG. 3

Rumswinkel states that the position of the armature shown in all of the figures is the “position of response.” The Office Action interprets this to mean that the shown position is the “equilibrium” position where no force from the springs is acting upon the armature 2. Also shown in the above Fig. 3 is the displacement of the armature from the clamping location of the springs (e.g., by the distance “b”). The Office Action further asserts that “at the center position, which is shifted to the left from what is shown in the

figures, the springs are inherently pre-tensioned as they are no longer at equilibrium.” (Office Action at Page 6).

As discussed above, when the armature is in the center position 1) it is aligned to the yoke body; and 2) it symmetrically oscillates about the center position while still having the springs pre-tensioned and axially displaced from their clamped position.

The only thing shown in the alleged above interpretation of Rumswinkel is that the armature and magnet are aligned. However, the armature does not symmetrically oscillate about this position as set forth in the claims.

To the contrary, it appears that the symmetric oscillation position would be the position of the armature shown in Fig. 3. As noted above, the Office Action acknowledges that no force or pre-tensioning is applied to the armature in this position.

Accordingly, neither Rumswinkel nor Zabar teach or suggest pre-tensioning of the spring to apply a force when the armature is at a middle point of symmetric oscillation.

Furthermore, it would appear that the manner of the alleged combination set forth in the Office Action would merely result in shifting the armature from the center position to a tensioned position (as opposed to tensioning to the center position as discussed in the instant specification). In other words, the center of a symmetric oscillation would still be the relaxed state of the spring. As discussed above, this is different from the claimed features.

Finally, the addition of Howe fails to make up for the above deficiencies. Accordingly, none of Zabar, Rumswinkel, Howe, and the alleged combination thereof fails to render obvious Applicants’ independent claims (and their respective dependents). Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the present Amendment. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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